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LIBERATING THE LOWER EDUCATION

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Economy in education is a reasonable demand. American universities object to the reputation of harboring many extravagant youth, and the most aristocratic institutions like to have it known that students not only can but do work their way through college. Some are waking up to see that economy in time is economy in money, and that four is not a sacred number of years. Work done, and not time spent, is more and more the unit of measurement. Since President William DeWitt Hyde wrote his famous article in the *Outlook* of August 2, 1902, from North Dakota University to Harvard experiments have been tried along the line of recognizing quality as well as quantity in working for a degree, and Columbia has set an example in flexibility for other universities to rival.

Secondary education is affected by whatever starts in the colleges. This is true of small places as well as large. Not only has Asbury Park, N. J., for instance, introduced recognition of quality as a principle of promotion, but on March 27, 1907, the Board of Education of the City of New York, in establishing the point system of promotion for twenty-five thousand high-school pupils, adopted an additional regulation for the stimulation of scholarship which deserves to be applied in other large cities as well. Hereafter, "for every ten points obtained with 80 per cent. or over the student will be entitled to one additional point." Thus 137 periods of high-class work for a half-year may count for 150 points, the number required for high-school graduation in New York City.

Promotion by points carries with it, of course, promotion by subject—a measure for economizing the time and the energy of both pupils and teachers, and the money of taxpayers, the importance of which can scarcely be overestimated.

In *A Broader Elementary Education* J. P. Gordy discusses,

at Chapter xx, "The Most Important Problem of Public School Administration." At page 225 he says:

I believe that President Eliot uttered a profound truth when he remarked that "to discriminate between pupils of different capacity, to select the competent for suitable instruction, and to advance each pupil with appropriate rapidity, will ultimately become the most important functions of the public-school administrator—those functions in which he or she will be most serviceable to families and to the state."

In commenting on this statement, Dr. Gordy says on the same page:

The integrity of the American college is very seriously threatened because our school superintendents have not yet generally recognized their obligation to promote bright pupils to a higher grade as soon as these are capable of doing the work of that grade.

Great city high schools have been woefully delinquent in recognizing the right of the individual pupil to progress according to ability, irrespective of the rate at which other pupils may advance. Promotion by general average or promotion on a minimum of periods of unsuccessful work are the two methods, in general use in large cities, which have driven thousands out of school and unnecessarily impeded the advance of thousands more who have remained. To allow a pupil to advance in a subject beyond his powers, simply because he has done well in other subjects, is nearly as unpedagogical as to oblige him to repeat subjects in which he is proficient because he has failed in others. These have been common practices in New York, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, and other great cities. The time has come when such practices should cease. The Board of Superintendents in the City of New York has been sustained in its determination in this matter by the Board of Education. What progress is being made in other cities in removing the evils involved in the neglecting and repeating systems of promotion to which reference has been made?

At page 189 of the *School Review* for March, 1907, is given an instance of the evil results of the previous method of promotion in New York City. To illustrate still further: About a year ago the writer examined the work of 163 boys in the middle of the high-school course, and found that 55 of them had

been "left back" seventy-one terms of work. In few of these cases had the deficiency been in more than half the subjects. The needless repetition amounted to fully thirty terms' work, or fifteen years.

The Committee on School Problems of the Brooklyn Teachers' Association, an organization of more than 4,500 teachers, has been carrying on a careful investigation of this subject. In October, 1906, the writer sent two questionnaires to prominent educators throughout the country. Five editions have since gone forth, and the questionnaires with forty-three interrogatories were reprinted in full in the *School Review* for April, 1907. The detailed results of about six hundred answers will be sent in due course to those who have contributed their experience and opinions in this symposium. A subcommittee of nine principals, heads of department, and teachers have been long at the task of tabulating and formulating the consensus of opinions. In the limits of this article it is impossible to do more than to forecast a few of the conclusions, and to quote some characteristic and widely divergent opinions along these lines. Many suggestions among those received will appear in the official report to which the statements subjoined call attention.

The following quotations are taken at random from the mass of opinions received. They are not selected because of the eminence of their writers, or any judgment of their superiority or prominence in comparison with other opinions which have been received. They reflect in some degree the preponderance of conviction or of practice revealed in the number of "yes" or "no" answers to the two lists of questions, as recorded in the tables at the end of this article. The interested reader is able to make his own fruitful inductions from these carefully tabulated votes, and the writer makes no effort now to formulate for him the natural conclusions involved. He invites special attention to the results of I, 3, 7, 14, 15, 17, 20, 21, and II, 1, 5, and 6.

The percentage of the "yes" or the "no" answers in the tabulations to their sum will give to the reader the approximate average judgment of the country on the various questions in these inquiries.

Commissioner E. E. Brown, Bureau of Education, Washington, D. C.: "Flexible grading has been in operation for the past twelve or fifteen years at Cambridge, Mass. I have found the reports of that system very interesting indeed. The experiment of flexible promotions has been tried for the past two or three years in the schools of Oakland, Cal. In the Cass School at Detroit, Mich., there was for many years, and I suppose is yet, an ungraded room of a different sort from the ungraded class with which we are generally familiar. This room in the Cass School is intended for unusually bright pupils and serves to promote the rapid passage from grade to grade without loss of subject-matter. The whole subject is one of great interest, and every experiment such as that to which you call attention, looking to a better care of the needs of individuals, must command the serious attention of those who have to do with American education."

Principal F. R. Lane, Polytechnic Preparatory School of Brooklyn: "I am in thorough accord with you in the points you make. Here in the Polytechnic Preparatory School 'every pupil is promoted, advanced, and graduated according to proficiency in each of certain numbers of required and elective subjects.' No other theory is to be tolerated for an instant, if the good of the individual pupil is to be considered rather than the smooth running of the school machine.

"While I am in thorough sympathy with the doctrine of quality rather than quantity for graduation, I realize that schools of this type are hampered by the very definite exactions in quantity that are made by the engineering schools, colleges, and universities. For the boy in the secondary school who is being educated for business rather than prepared for admission to some institution, and for the college man, there is every argument in favor of the theory as expounded by you."

L. L. Hooper, headmaster of the Washington School, Washington, D. C.: "We have in the Washington School a complete elective system, there being absolutely no fixed course. A separate programme is made out for each boy. We have tried this plan for seven years, and we have found it exceedingly valuable."

Principal R. W. Strong, Ashland School, Denver, Colo.: "There is great liberty in my school, but no license I hope. There is great flexibility, and yet there is 'system;' but individuality is allowed considerable opportunity to develop, when the attribute is worthy and when a pupil is under a teacher who knows enough to direct intelligently."

Superintendent O. P. Bostwick, Clinton, Iowa: "In the graded schools of this city opportunity is offered to all pupils to move through the course as rapidly as the development of their intellectual powers will permit. Pupils who possess ability, energy, ambition, and good health are able to complete the course in less than the prescribed number of years, thus showing that the graded school is not necessarily a mechanical system. Of the 152 pupils

who graduated from the graded department in 1905, 6 completed the 9 grades in $8\frac{1}{2}$ years; 9, in $8\frac{3}{4}$ years; 17 went through in 8 years; 2, in $7\frac{1}{4}$ years; and 4, in 7 years; making a total of 38 who completed the course of 9 grades in less than 9 years, being 25 per cent. of the total number; which proves that the bright pupil is recognized, and that ability and ambition will carry him through the course in less than the average time. On the other hand, there were 5 pupils who took 12 years to complete the course; 5 who took 11 years, and 34 who took 10 years; thus showing that the pupils who are irregular in their attendance, on account of sickness or for other reasons, and those who are not able to master their lessons easily, have ample opportunity to make their progress through the graded course in accordance with individual scholarship as shown at the successive stages of work."

Superintendent W. S. Siders, Pocatello, Idaho: "*Grouping study and recitation.*—Every half-yearly grade is divided into two groups, or classes, known as Division I and Division II. There is placed but one half-yearly grade to a room, so that the above is possible. Division I is the fast-working class, having a shorter time assignment for recitation and a longer time for class study. Division II is the slow-working class, having a longer time for class recitation, in order that they may work more with the teacher, and a shorter time for study, as you must see through necessity of arrangement. We experience no trouble from this source, however, as the pupils are not capable of so much effort unguided as the other group.

"Whenever a logical portion of a subject has been taught to a division, and the test upon the same shows that some are proficient and some are not, those that are proficient are excused from recitation, and the ones needing further instruction are called into recitation at the regular class time. Those not required to come to recitation are given supplementary work in the same subject or are given work in other subjects. When this segregated group is worked up to a proficient standard, the class is all called together again, and the work proceeds. There are no fixed groups; they differ in every subject taught, and are created as necessity arises. There is no appreciable loss of time to the bright student, because he pushes his investigations forward while the teacher is handling the others."

J. M. Green, principal of the New Jersey State Normal and Model Schools, Trenton, N. J.: "We promote by subject, and we promote a pupil in any one subject without regard to the others, unless it might be penmanship, or something in which he could improve as well in one grade as in another.

"When it appears to the teacher of a certain subject that a certain pupil is sufficiently in advance of his class or grade to go forward to the next grade, to keep him back seems to me to be an inexcusable injustice."

J. D. Story, Department of Public Instruction, Brisbane, Queensland: "Pupils are promoted from class to class upward through the school, trying

to keep the classes together as much as possible, but endeavoring to find a way to advance the education of the clever pupils."

Principal W. S. Murray, Robert College, Constantinople, Turkey: "Our students are usually older than the age limit in the respective grades; so, when a student does the work of his grade fairly well and when we think that he can do the work of the next grade, we advance him at any time. We have had a boy begin the year with the second class and finish the year with the fourth class. In such cases advancement depends largely on ability to learn to use the English language."

A boy writes in the *High School Recorder* of the Brooklyn Boys' High School: "Is there any better way of becoming acquainted with our school-mates than by the present system of promotion? I think not. We now have acquaintances in nearly every room of the building. What with advances and conditions the classes are so divided that we soon get rid of the narrow-mindedness which used to exist. The future must bring us directly in touch with a far greater number of students. This is another one of the almost innumerable blessings of the new system." Harold Callahan is the boy.

Principal J. Wallis, Queen Alexandra School, Toronto: "What is so clearly for the children's good must surely be a possibility, if we set ourselves resolutely to accomplish it. I purpose trying what can be done in this school."

J. R. Inch, chief superintendent of education, Fredericton, New Brunswick: "I will give careful consideration to your suggestions, with a view of possibly introducing the plan in the schools of New Brunswick."

C. L. Sawyer, ex-principal of high school, Minneapolis, Minn.: "There is no reason why in a city like Minneapolis three million dollars worth of school property should lie idle for nearly one-third of the year. I would divide the year into four terms, allowing entrance of pupils to the high school every term. In this way I would shorten the high-school course to three years for those who put in four terms per year, and four years for those who through illness or lack of ability, physical or mental, are unable to remain in school for the entire year. I would promote pupils according to the number of studies completed."

W. L. Sayre, principal Manual Training High School, Philadelphia (extract from Annual Report to the Board of Education, 1906): "Finally, as to the real work of the school itself. It has largely been left free to work out its educational salvation in accordance with its own ideas, and possibly with little sympathy with narrow conventional usages and methods. Its roster is so arranged that the requirements of both the bright pupil and the slower one are adequately met. By grouping the more clever boys in separate sections, and advancing both the brighter and slower classes as rapidly as they are capable of taking the instruction, the 'demon of uniformity' which goes up

and down the educational world, seeking to devour the individuality of our school children, is thereby exorcised and the freest play to the pupils' intellectual life is guaranteed.

"Instead of pursuing throughout the whole school year some dozen or more parallel studies, with infrequent recitations, and with a hard and fast examination at the final heat, our school year is divided into three terms—fall, winter, and spring—each term seeing the beginning and completion of some subject, or some rounded division of a subject, involving as few distinct studies at one time as possible. At the end of the school year, with all the work of that year thoroughly covered, the boy who, so far as in him lies, has to the best of his ability done good and faithful work, is rewarded with promotion. When the three years' course is finished, the slower boy, having possibly not 'arrived' at the standard whose educational exponent is 70, may not receive his diploma, but he has got out of the school all there was in it for *him*—which is of more value than many diplomas. Of course, he may repeat the year, but the strong probabilities are that the kind of training which has opened so many doors to him, will enable him to enter through one of these doors to the successful prosecution of his life work."

Superintendent M. A. Whitney, Elgin, Ill.: "We have had promotion by subjects for ten years. We also have half-yearly promotions. This makes it easy for pupils to gain time. We do not require pupils to take all of the work of any grade unless they are capable of doing so. They may take what they are able now and do the rest at some other time. We have a few irregular students, but irregularities do not trouble us now. At first teachers were a little annoyed by having one or two pupils come from another room, but they have become accustomed to it. We think more of what is best for the child than of what is convenient for the teacher."

Superintendent J. M. White, Carthage, Mo.: "A rule requiring a high-school pupil to repeat *all* the subjects of a certain term or year because he failed in one or more is simply monstrous. I have never before heard of such a practice."

G. W. Evans, headmaster of the Charlestown High School, Boston: "I think the development of the plan of promotion by subject is sure to lead to two fundamental questions: first, in regard to accuracy and conformity in the definition of different subjects, and, second, in regard to some efficient test and record of the pupils' achievements.

"The college authorities have already formulated a set of definitions for a good many secondary-school subjects. In my opinion, these definitions need to be carefully reconsidered, if they are to serve as definitions for the same subjects in secondary work which is not directly preparatory for college. The college definitions are, it seems to me, too technical, too rigid, and require

in many cases a conventional arrangement of topics not calculated to promote that flexibility which is necessary for sound educational progress.

"On the other hand, the marking system even in the revised form which is now in favor is profoundly unsatisfactory and has always been so. It is unquestionably true that the pupil may have satisfactory marks—that is to say, marks which will permit him to obtain his diploma of a school or his admission certificate of a college, without having the information and the accomplishments that are absolutely requisite for the proper continuation of his studies. In these two lines, then, a great deal of work is to be done, if, as I hope, the system of promotion by subject prevails. I hope that your committee in continuing its work may see fit to open one or both of these important questions.

"A mark of 60 per cent. means nothing except in connection with pretty definite information as to how marks are assigned. If I were allowed to state an ideal form of the rule referred to, I should say: Promotion shall be made by subjects. A student shall be considered to have satisfactorily completed a subject prescribed in any term, when the teacher is willing to certify that he has the minimum information and capacity that should be expected of him in order to go on with the next grade of instruction in the same subject."

Dr. W. B. Gunnison, principal of Erasmus Hall High School, Brooklyn: "It seems to me that the statement made by Principal Evans, of the Charlestown High School, is an exceedingly able statement. It is exactly my idea of what the minimum marks should be. The only question is: What shall we name the point? New York names it 60 per cent., and a rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

"I am delighted to get the indication of the trend of votes on the circular, and particularly on the matter of subject-promotion. Wherever I have spoken of this matter publicly, I have always premised my remarks with a statement that it seemed queer that we should even discuss the question of promotion by subject, inasmuch as I believe there is hardly a city in the country—and certainly not a small city—that has not promotion by subjects as an established plan, and that in discussing it in New York we are simply showing how far behind we are. Therefore your statement is really expected. It is a good thing, however, to have the actual vote."

F. S. Tisdale, superintendent, Watertown, N. Y.: "My opinion in regard to flexibility and variety is that there should be sufficient flexibility to the school course profitably to employ the time of the students, but there should not be such a great variety as to cause the school to be turned into a chaos, and thus defeat the very end sought.

"As to promotion by subjects or by grades, pupils are promoted by grades in the primary and grammar schools, with this exception, that whenever a pupil, by reason of age or special aptitude, is able to do the work of the next

grade, he is promoted to that grade. In the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades, in which we have the departmental system, the promotion is practically by subjects. That is, in case a pupil has done satisfactory work in all except one subject, such a pupil is allowed to advance, but is required to do double work in the subject in which he has not met the requirements. That is, he takes both the work of the advanced grade and also the work which he has just passed over. In case a pupil of the eighth has completed all the work of the grammar school satisfactorily excepting one or two subjects, the pupil is allowed to enter the high school, to take two or three subjects, as the case may be. Such a pupil, however, continues to rank as a grammar-school pupil; his attendance is credited in the grammar school, and the pupil does not become a student of high-school rank until the subjects which are lacking are properly made up.

"It can be easily arranged so that each student can be advanced as rapidly as his ability will permit, without reference to his fellows, by taking additional subjects. Of the plan, however, which is practiced in a few places, of disregarding all grading and having no classification by classes, I would not approve. All classes have their limitations as to the amount of time which can be given to each student or to each group of students. If it were possible to have a small number of pupils to each teacher, it would be possible to permit in the grammar schools each pupil to advance without reference to his fellows. But where the number of pupils for each teacher exceeds twenty, this plan hardly seems to me to be practicable.

"So far as promotion from the grades is concerned, under our plan the bright pupil reaches the high school at twelve years of age, the dull one at fifteen. It seems to me that, all things considered, twelve years is young enough for even a bright pupil to enter the high school."

President A. T. Hadley, Yale University: "Anything that increases the efficiency of our schools will tend to show the advantage of live teaching over mechanical teaching; and flexibility will doubtless be a help in this direction. But we must not expect very quick results from a change of plan, unless accompanied by great intelligence on the part of principals and supervisors.

"With a good amount of money and air space per capita, the larger the school the better you can provide for individual needs. This fact is often overlooked, because people compare small schools which have large endowment and space per capita with large schools whose conditions are less favorable in these respects."

President J. G. Schurman, Cornell University: "Let me say in reply in a single word that I believe in promotion on the basis of work done, and I think that when a pupil has passed in any subject he ought to be advanced even though the majority of the class to which he then belonged has failed in that subject. The more capable or better-trained pupil ought not to be sacrificed to the average or less than average pupils."

On the problem of shortening courses the following opinions are of interest.

Rome G. Brown, president of the Associated Harvard Clubs, Minneapolis, Minn.: "Answering your inquiries: I have not paid any particular attention to the secondary-school question, except as incidental to the question of the three-year course which I studied for a couple of years as chairman of the three-year course committee of the Associated Harvard Clubs. However, my studies convinced me that the total time required for a liberal education, which at the present time is on the basis of sixteen years, must be shortened. I believe the shortening process has got to be brought about gradually. I believe that eventually the shortening process must be carried to the extent that substantially a total of two years will be cut off from the present period of sixteen years. A sixteen-year period for a liberal education from the primary school to the degree of A.B. makes the average graduate twenty-two years of age when he receives his A.B.; for the average age of entrance to the primary school is approximately six years. This makes at the present time twelve years from entrance to the primary school to entrance at the university, and an average entrance at the age of eighteen or eighteen and one-half years, and, as I say, the receipt of the A.B. degree at the age of twenty-two or twenty-two and one-half years. I am speaking only of averages.

"Now, it is not wise to carry out at once what must ultimately be the result of the necessary shortening process; that is, it is not feasible to shorten the entire period required for a liberal education by cutting off two years at once. I believe that one of the years can, and should be, and must be cut off in the college course. I do not believe any further shortening should be allowed to be made in the college course, and I believe that the shortening in the college course should be the first reform. We have then cut down the period by one year, and we have made graduation at the average age of twenty-one years instead of twenty-two, and have left the periods in the secondary schools the same as before. When the college course has been shortened to three years, and until a further shortening is attempted in the time occupied in the secondary schools (I am using this term "secondary" as meaning everything below the colleges), I believe that the high-school period should be retained at four years. The shortening of the college course would require perhaps some higher requirements; and I think a thorough high-school course is necessary, that the four-year period in the high school should be kept, and that the standard should be maintained and even raised. Indeed, I think the same thing is true in connection with and after a further shortening of time in the schools leading up to college. When the college course has been shortened to three years, and the total period for a liberal education has been made fifteen years instead of sixteen, I think the periods should be as follows:

Primary and intermediate schools together.....	5 years
Grammar school.....	3 years
High school.....	4 years
College.....	3 years
Total.....	15 years

"But I believe that the shortening process must be further carried on to the extent of one year, and that that shortening has got to come in the school period prior to the college course, as I do not believe in any further attempted shortening of the college course. It seems to me that this further shortening should be made in the period occupied by the primary school, or in the periods which under your Plan B you call the primary and intermediate school periods; and I think those two periods should eventually be made four years, and the grammar school retained at three and the high school at four and the college at three, making a total for liberal education of fourteen years, which would give the average student his A.B. in his twenty-first year, that is, when he is twenty or twenty and one-half. Then with three or four years of professional study he would get his professional degrees at twenty-two or twenty-four, and would be ready for active work in one, two, or three years thereafter, according to the length of time which he spent in apprenticeship years necessary to any special profession. The period of active work would average about the age of twenty-five years, and in some cases would be the age of twenty-three or twenty-four years. This would be two years less than the present period, and I think that that amount of shortening is desirable, and that it must come, and that it will come."

Superintendent S. D. Brooks, Boston: "Answering question No. 21 as to what objections I have to Plan B, I wish to say that the desire for mathematical uniformity has obscured the real situation. In my judgment, a better division would be as follows: primary school, 5 years; grammar school, 3 years; high school, 4 years; college, 4 years. Briefly, the reasons are that the child at the beginning of his school course is not largely responsible for his own conduct, while at the end of his high-school course we expect to hold him entirely responsible for his own conduct. It is desirable that between these two points there be a gradual increase in the amount of responsibility placed upon pupils. We have ample evidence that beginning with ten or eleven years there is a rapid increase in the child's desire to control himself; or, conversely stated, we find at this point very strong objections arising to control by authority.

"In my judgment, it is very desirable that children from the first to the fifth grade be placed in buildings separate from those which include the sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. In our system this division may be readily adopted by providing a central grammar school for these three upper grades, and several primary buildings for the five lower grades. In this central grammar school the ideals of discipline and the amount of responsibility

placed upon the child would be radically different from the conditions prevailing in the primary schools. These grammar schools would unquestionably profit by the maintenance of the departmental system of instruction. This in turn would prepare pupils better for the high-school work to follow.

"Boston for many years has had a division between the third and fourth grades. It has always been deemed harmful, and this very year it has been discontinued. We should look with grave disfavor upon any effort to revive it."

Professor C. Davidson, Department of Education, University of Maine: "I would have an elementary school of six years, beginning with the first grade. This school should be a unit and comparatively independent of the higher schools. . . . I would provide a six-year higher school, divided into a junior high school of two years, and the various general, commercial, technical, etc., high schools of four years. I believe the junior high school with the leading subjects departmental is a better school than a grammar school of the seventh and eighth grades."

Superintendent M. C. Smart, Littleton, N. H.: "There is an undoubted need for a readjustment of programmes so as to allow greater flexibility. The difficulty in making the change lies, I think, principally in three conditions: first, the additional cost; second, the difficulty of securing competent teachers; third, the uncertainty of educators as to just what needs to be done. The second condition depends quite largely on the first. When the people awake to the conviction that the teacher is the most important factor in the development of the child, and the consequent advancement of civilization, they will doubtless be willing to provide the means necessary to secure the best talent for this important vocation. Both the first and the second depend to a large extent on the third. So long as the leaders in educational thought are divided in opinion as to what are the essential things in subject-matter, methods, and administrative practice, the people cannot be blamed for being unwilling to furnish money for uncertain experiments. But when we have reached an agreement upon the essentials, and have convinced the people that certain things are necessary to the highest welfare of their children and their communities, I believe the necessary means will be forthcoming."

"As to Plans A and B, it seems to me that neither fills the bill. There seems now to be a tendency to lengthen the high-school curriculum by working downward into the grades. This seems to me natural and wholesome. I believe the tendency is toward an affirmative answer to the question: 'Should the twelve-year course of study be equally divided between the elementary school and the secondary school?'

"In our country, particularly in New England, foreign languages, commonly, though perhaps erroneously, regarded as high-school subjects, are begun too late, after the best period for the acquisition of a foreign language has

begun to wane. French and German should be begun far down in the grades, and Latin much earlier than is the prevailing custom, and the methods should be adapted to the child mind. The elements of other subjects commonly relegated to the high school could also be taught much earlier than is commonly done.

"The theory I know is not new, but the practice has yet to come in most of the New England schools at least. At present I do not favor a three-year college curriculum, but with a proper readjustment and improvement of the work below that might come without detriment to the student."

W. C. Sabine, dean of the Lawrence Scientific School, Harvard University: "On the general question I have a very decided opinion, which I am glad to give you. I believe thoroughly in the undisguised three-year course in college leading to the bachelor's degree. I do not believe in a compromise plan of three years in college and one year in a professional school. I believe in very considerable flexibility in the secondary-school instruction and a corresponding adaptation of the admission requirements of the colleges."

Professor A. O. Norton, Harvard University: "At Harvard exceptional men may do the course in three years. These are exceptional men, as our records show, for they are men of considerably higher average scholarship than the four-year men. Obviously they are able to work not only faster, but more efficiently, than the four-year men. Our principle is that these men should not be restrained from doing their work at their best speed by the theory that a four-year course is the traditional time for all. The same principle should apply to every stage of school life. Note in this connection the admirably flexible scheme in the schools of Cambridge, Mass., by which the elementary-school work may be completed in seven, eight, or nine years, according to the student's ability.

"Theoretically, compulsory attendance at school for nine years is desirable; but only in case a far greater variety of schools, or studies is opened to students from twelve to fifteen. I certainly disbelieve in compelling all children between these ages to go through our present grammar-school course, or a practical continuation of it. In my opinion, this course is adapted only to a minority of the school population between these ages; and, as a matter of fact, only a minority of these children are to be found in the upper grammar-school grades. After eliminating all external causes for leaving school, such as illness, poverty, and the like, we find a chief cause in the failure of the grammar schools to adapt themselves to the actual needs of the majority. To me, the plain lesson is that we must offer work of far greater variety, and give freedom of choice, properly supervised, between various courses.

"My theory of a liberal education—so far as organization is concerned—is this: The work should be continuous, without abrupt breaks, for the

whole period. Each year's work should represent the best possible attainment for each student up to that point, without reference to what is to follow; so that at whatever point the student leaves school he will have had all that could be done for him under any conditions, at that stage. If this vital principle is observed, division by trienniums or quadrenniums will be beside the point. Both are objectionable if they imply discontinuity. In general, I think a better plan is a seven-year grammar-school course (including primary and intermediate grades), followed by five years in the high school, for the average student. Exceptional students should be allowed to do the work in four years."

T. W. Richards, professor of chemistry, Harvard University: "I have the same objection to Plan B that I have to Plan A, or to any other plan which uses time of study, or a fixed number of courses of study, as the chief criterion of fitness. I believe that some minds can gain more in two years than others can in four years, and that, if we try to hold back the bright ones to the pace of the slow ones, civilization will be retarded, because the best minds, the leaders, will not be allowed to attain their full development."

Superintendent E. B. Durfee, Fall River, Mass.: "We have always had a nine-year course below the high school, so in that respect Plan B does not differ materially from our plan. If the requirements of the colleges will permit it, I should like to see Plan B tried in the secondary schools."

Miss Kate E. Turner, of Erasmus Hall High School, Brooklyn, has by request furnished the following statement on programme-making:

In the making of a programme for a large school it is imperative that the maker of the school programme have an accurate and thorough knowledge of the organization and mechanism of the school, and character of the work done by its students. Schools differ so largely in their working characteristics and in their facilities that what would fit one school in the way of a programme would be totally inadequate and a misfit for another. It is quite evident that schools vary as much as pupils vary, and any project to prescribe a programme that would be a panacea for the trials and disorders of special programmes in any and all schools of a system would be a failure. Schools need special programmes quite as much as do pupils.

In the school in which I am interested the reports show that the majority of failures in the earlier grades occur in Latin and mathematics. These two subjects, then, are the subjects that will necessarily come up for adjustment most frequently in the special programmes, and must be borne in mind when the school programme is being drafted. The main object, after providing means for making up conditioned subjects, is to keep each pupil as far as possible with his regular class.

There are three ways in which these subjects have been cared for in this school.

1. By providing for each class, where the subject in question is being taught, a corresponding period for it in the grade below and in the grade above. Thus, if 2B Latin is taught the first period daily in one class, there should be found through the entire school a Latin class the first period each day in each grade. Or if this is not possible, through some necessity of organization or of shortage of teachers, the need is often met by having the subject taught in the lower grade while the upper grade is having a study period. This does not disarrange the pupil's programme in the least, and keeps him with his mates in all subjects except Latin.

2. By segregating all pupils with like conditions, and drafting a programme especially for them. This necessitates no special programming for each member of the class, and is simply forestalling the needs of a number of pupils who have similar variations from the regular course of study. Thus, it is often possible to find in a 1B or 2A grade twenty-five or thirty pupils who carry straight work with just Latin below grade. These pupils have been put in one section by themselves, and 1A or 1B Latin made the Latin for the class. This method of looking after irregular pupils has not been very satisfactory, as it reorganizes the sections and breaks up attachments that have been formed among classmates or between class-teacher and pupil. It also brands the class as inferior to the rest of the grade, which is very undesirable.

3. By organizing special classes for conditioned pupils, and not allowing them to take the conditioned subjects in the regular classes of the grade below. If planned with care, this method uses no more teaching force than any other method, and it saves many of the beginning classes from overcrowding by reason of having the "drop-backs" with them. It also gives opportunity to treat pupils who are going over a subject for a second time in a somewhat different manner from those who are attempting it for the first time. It has been possible sometimes to attempt to have these "drop-backs" catch up with the regular grade, or at least to do more than the classes who are going over the work for the first time. In organizing these special "drop-back" classes the main object is to set them at a period of the day when the majority of the students of the grade have a study period. This means, then, that where this system is to be used the study periods of the several sections must be set for the same period, so that nothing may interfere with the majority or all of the conditioned students dropping out into the special class.

The first and third methods have worked out best in this school, and the third method has been used only in the lower grades. To the subjects (other than Latin and mathematics) in which a comparatively small number are conditioned, not very much special attention need be given in the general drafting of the regular programme, other than to see to it that a subject

comes the same period each day on a class programme. That is, if it comes the second period Monday, it should come the second period every other day that it occurs. Great complexity and difficulty is encountered when a subject changes from one period to another.

Other considerations that are taken into account in drafting a school programme are the following: Each section-teacher where possible keeps his own class through the four years as section-teacher, and, if practicable and desirable, teaches his own class for four years. This keeps him in touch with the work and interests of his section. Each subject-teacher keeps a class one year, where the nature of the subject makes it possible and profitable. This saves much time in getting acquainted each term, and yet provides for enough variety of method and view-point of instruction. Thus, a normal pupil changes his Latin teacher once a year and meets in his course four different instructors in Latin. On the actual making of special programmes I should like to say a few words. For the fall term irregular students are summoned for the Saturday before school begins, to have their programmes adjusted, and for the February term, the day before the new term begins. Each grade adviser has a copy of the school programme for all the classes of his grade, the grade above, and the grade below. Each pupil presents his report for the previous term. On this are all conditions and advancements to date. Most of the advisers have the programmes copied on the board, and the pupils are able to do a great deal toward making their own programmes. One teacher used mimeograph copies of the school programme for the pupils to work from, and reports that they were much more expeditious working in this way than from the board copy. Each pupil's programme is O.K.'d after personal conference with the adviser. Then three copies are made: one for the grade adviser, one for the section teacher, and one for filing in the office. Very rarely does it happen that any desired combination of subjects cannot be made. When it does happen, it has always been possible to map out the course in another way; but this has happened so seldom that it does not figure as a contingency in programme-making. The grade adviser studies the case and recommends to the principal any desired deviation from the regular course of study. If the principal approves, it is put into operation. The grade adviser is not delegated with the authority of dropping a subject or advancing a pupil in a subject.

The one phase of special programme-making that is engaging experimentation with us at present is that stage of the process which comes after all programmes have been adjusted, and it is found that a few classes have become depleted and others unwarrantably large by reason of pupils dropping out or dropping in. At present the most effective way we have of overcoming this difficulty is by having duplicate classes at the same period in the same grade. If both become small, they may be merged; if one becomes large and the other small, they may be equalized; if both become large, of course it means that a new section must be organized. Under any of these

conditions the pupil's programme is not disturbed. We are working on this part of the problem now. The essential factor in all the special programme-making is that the pupil be put to work at the start of the term; that he get in at the first recitations; the other matters can be adjusted later.

Sets of answers to the questionnaires have been received from the following states, territories, and foreign countries:

A. North-Atlantic Division—

Maine	7
New Hampshire	9
Massachusetts	53
Vermont	9
Rhode Island	8
Connecticut	11
New York	148
New Jersey	24
Pennsylvania	30
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	299

B. South-Atlantic Division—

Delaware	1
Maryland	7
District of Columbia	6
Virginia	3
West Virginia	3
North Carolina	3
South Carolina	3
Georgia	5
Florida	3
	<hr/>
	34

C. South-Central Division—

Kentucky	13
Tennessee	3
Alabama	3
Mississippi	1
Texas	8
Louisiana	4
Arkansas	1
Oklahoma	3
Indian Territory	2
	<hr/>

D. *North-Central Division—*

Ohio	28
Indiana	16
Illinois	43
Michigan	17
Wisconsin	19
Iowa	10
Minnesota	16
Missouri	11
North Dakota	1
South Dakota	9
Nebraska	6
Kansas	7

183
E. *Western Division—*

Montana	3
Wyoming	3
Colorado	9
New Mexico	2
Arizona	2
Utah	4
Idaho	2
Washington	12
Oregon	2
California	20

59
F. *Dependencies—*

Alaska	1
Hawaii	3
Philippine Islands	1

5
G. *Foreign Division—*

Canada	11
Mexico	3
England	2
Scotland	1
Russia	2
Turkey	1
China	1
Japan	1

22

These sets of answers have come from the following classes of educators:

Superintendents	253
Principals	239
Teachers	37
College presidents	25
College professors	28
Normal-school presidents	26
Normal-school teachers	4
Supervisors of training schools	7
Inspectors of schools	11
State superintendents of schools.....	6
Lecturers	3
Minister of public instruction.....	1
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SUMMARY OF TABULATION

I. QUESTIONNAIRE ON PROMOTION BY SUBJECT

	Yes	No	Indefi- nite	No Answer	Total
1. In your school is there much flexibility and variety?.....	349	205	8	45	607
2. Do you promote your students by subjects or by grades?.....	261	293	11	42	607
3. Do you make a student who has failed in some of the work of the grade take all the work of the grade again?.....	206	357	6	38	607
4. Do your schools take care of the individual student's needs in any way?.....	473	86	5	43	607
5. Do you think each student should be advanced as rapidly as his ability will permit without reference to his fellows?.....	530	60	3	14	607
If not, why not?.....					
6. Should the brilliant student be kept back with the dull student?.....	53	535	6	13	607
If so, why?.....					
7. Should a student be given extra credit for superior work?.....	383	120	32	72	607
If so, on what basis?.....					
8. Would individual programmes result in greater interest and a better quality of work?.....	290	170	66	81	607
9. Do you regard the quality or the quantity of a student's work more important?*	396	16	48	147	607
10. Would an advantage given to a bright student discourage or injure a dull one?	131	368	40	68	607
11. Under a flexible scheme would a precocious student be prepared for life too young?.....	179	349	34	45	607
12. Should the brilliant student take more or less work than the dull student?†.....	391	10	35	171	607

* Quality, 396; quantity 16.

† More, 391; less, 10.

SUMMARY OF TABULATION—*Continued*

	Yes	No	Indefinite	No Answer	Total
13. Would the flexible plan help to do away with the mechanical teacher?.....	408	112	34	53	607
14. Would it be just as practicable to maintain the flexible individual plan in a large school, where the working force is greater, as in a small school?.....	398	128	23	58	607
15. Do you favor the advancement by subject plan?.....	428	113	17	49	607
If not, what are your objections to it?.....	76	212	4	315	607
16. Do you know of a better plan?.....	434	13	3	157	607
If so, what is it?.....	...	...	..	366	607
17. Would you like to have this topic discussed at an early N. E. A. meeting?.....	...	...	..	356	607
18. What proportion of the pupils that leave your school or schools are recruited from those who are compelled to repeat tasks once satisfactorily done? *.....	103	192	54	258	607
19. What percentage of "left back" or "left down" pupils are promoted the following term? †.....	299	123	74	111	607
20. Do you approve the following Rules 1 and 2 of the New York City Board of Education, in force since May 3, 1904, the rescinding of which is now generally desired? No student shall be promoted from the first term to the second or from the second term to the third, whose conditions aggregate ten (10) hours (periods) in subjects requiring preparation. No student shall be promoted from the third term to the fourth, or from the fourth term to the fifth, or from the fifth term to the sixth, whose conditions aggregate nine (9) hours, or if he be conditioned in three subjects requiring preparation.	...	...	..	...	...
21. Do you approve the following rule proposed last January by the Board of Superintendents in New York City? ‡..... Promotion shall be made by subjects. A student shall be considered to have satisfactorily completed a subject prescribed in any term when he has attained a mark of 60 per cent. and shall thereupon be promoted in such subject. If not, will you say why not?.....	415	24	1	167	607
22. Are you willing to be quoted as holding the views expressed in your answers to above questions?.....					

* Average of 241 answers 18.7%

† Average of 251 answers, 67.7%

‡ January, 1906.

II. QUESTIONNAIRE ON THREE-YEAR COURSES

Plan A—Present system:

Primary school..... 4 years
 Grammar school..... 4 years
 High school..... 4 years
 College..... 4 years

A liberal education..... 16 years

Plan B—Proposed system:

Primary school..... 3 years
 Intermediate school..... 3 years
 Grammar school..... 3 years
 High school..... 3 years
 College..... 3 years

A liberal education..... 15 years

SUMMARY OF TABULATION—*Continued*

	Yes	No	Indefinite	No Answer	Total
1. Do you think Plan B is an improvement on Plan A?.....	240	230	24	29	523
2. Do you think it worth while to save this year before professional study is begun? ...	306	154	20	43	523
3. Do you think the transitions in B easier than in A?.....	213	197	44	69	523
4. Would the year added to the pre-high-school period discourage more students from finishing to that point?.....	201	236	51	35	523
5. Would this additional year provide departmental study for many who do not enter high school?.....	268	94	70	91	523
6. Would you favor departmental teaching throughout the three years of the grammar school under Plan B, at least in large cities?.....	324	127	32	40	523
7. Would the nine years from the age of six till that of fifteen be too long for the period of compulsory education?	115	353	14	41	523
8. Would Plan B prevent many from dropping out in high school during the first year?	210	198	52	63	523
9. With the high-school course reduced to three years, would more students complete it?	294	133	44	52	523
10. Under Plan B do you think more students would go to college?.....	209	192	46	76	523
11. Which plan is prevalent in your school?....	179A	21B	14	109	523
12. What proportion of your students go to high school?*. .....	....	....	....	194	523
13. What proportion drop out of high school during the first year?†.....	....	....	....	220	523
14. What proportion go to college?‡.....	....	....	....	185	523
15. Do you think the divisions in B would be easier to manage than those in A?.....	162	239	21	101	523
16. Under B could students in case of necessity discontinue their work at more convenient stages than under A?.....	170	197	44	112	523
17. Is the tendency in your community to shorten the period of preparation for life?..	230	211	15	67	523
18. Would students under B be crowded by too much work?.....	138	241	54	90	523
19. Would the triennial period system be better for flexible advancement by subject?..	186	175	44	118	523
20. Do you think the proposed shortening of the high-school and college courses to three years each would take anything indispensable from them, or cheapen them?	210	209	29	75	523
21. What objections have you to Plan B?.....					

* Average of 329 answers, 48.1%.

† Average of 303 answers, 25.4%.

‡ Average of 338 answers, 29%.

Andrew W. Edson, associate superintendent of schools, New York City, has kindly furnished the following :

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